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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In Re: Application Ser. No. 09/940,415 : Art Unit 1756

Filed 8/28/01 : Exr. John A. McPherson

Inventors Cordes et al : Atty Dkt No YOR920000827US1

For: PRECISION APERTURES FOR LITHOGRAPHIC SYSTEMS
Response to 10/07/03 Office Action

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Va. 22313-1450

Sir:

In response to the 10/7/03 Office Action in which there are: an Objection to the specification, a claim rejection under 35USC112 and three rejections of all the claims on each of three references.

Considering the Objection to the specification; Examiner's point is well taken. The doping levels for the membrane layer and for the frame were inadvertently reversed. Amendment instructions, Page 1 for the specification, are provided herewith for the correction of the membrane layer doping to be 7×10^{19} atoms/ cm^3 and the frame doping to be 10^{16} , conforming to the rest of the specification. Approval is asked.

Considering the Claim Rejections under 35USC112 where Claim 15 is rejected as being inconsistent with the language of the claim from which it depends. Amendment instructions Page 2 for the claims, are provided herewith for the conforming of claim 15 to claim 13. Approval is asked.

Considering the three 35USC102 rejections of all the claims on each of: the 2001/0016294; the JP 11-168049, and the U.S. 5,972,794 references; it is respectfully urged that each rejection be reconsidered in the light of the following. In a "102" rejection the claim must be fully met in the reference. In applicants' claims there is an essential limitation that is not present in the references. The essential limitation is that the interface of the membrane layer member, with the frame or support member, be epitaxial. The limitation is present in the first independent Claim 1 in line 10 and it is present in the other independent Claim 8 in line 13. The limitation is essential in that it materially strengthens the unsupported portion of the aperture member thus providing an improved aperture member. The epitaxial interface can be seen in Fig. 3 at the interface between the heavily doped layer 5 and the frame 4. It is submitted that heavily doped layers are known in the art, but that it is advantageous to have an epitaxial interface, is appellants contribution to the art, that it is not present in the art and that applicant's claims patently distinguish over the art by the epitaxial limitation.

Respectfully submitted,

Alvin J. Riddles 2/7/04

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